



National Asthma Control Program

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

- In 2002, an estimated 30.8 million people in the United States had been diagnosed with asthma during their lifetime, 20.0 million currently were diagnosed with asthma, and 11.9 million had experienced an asthma episode/attack in the previous year. Asthma accounted for 13.9 million outpatient visits, 1.9 million emergency room visits, and 484,000 hospitalizations. In 2001, asthma accounted for 4,269 deaths.
- The economic impact of asthma, was estimated at \$12.7 billion in 2000 and \$14 billion in 2001, in a study commissioned by the American Lung Association (ALA) to study asthma costs
- Currently, asthma cannot be prevented or cured. However, people who have asthma can still lead quality, productive lives if they control their asthma. Asthma can be controlled by following a medical management plan and by avoiding contact with environmental “triggers” such as dust mites, furry pets, and tobacco smoke.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

The National Asthma Control Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working to help reduce the burden of asthma through effective control of the disease. The goals of the program are to reduce the number of deaths, hospitalizations, emergency department visits, school or work days missed, and limitations on activity due to asthma. The program consists of three components: (1) Tracking: collecting and analyzing data on an ongoing basis to understand the “who, what, and where” of asthma; (2) Interventions: ensuring that scientific information is translated into public health practices and programs to reduce the burden of asthma; and (3) Partnerships: ensuring that all stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating local asthma control programs.

With appropriations of \$37.1 million in fiscal year (FY) 2004, CDC funded 37 states, nine cities, one territory (Puerto Rico), and a number of other partners, including other federal agencies, universities, and national organizations, under its National Asthma Control Program. The Program includes seven asthma tracking, 29 intervention, 39 partnership, two public health research, and seven directed source funding projects. CDC also funded seven urban school districts, one state education agency, and six national nongovernmental organizations to support and address asthma control within a coordinated school health program. CDC is supporting interventions that have been shown to reduce the burden of asthma. For example, CDC is funding grantees to implement two scientifically evaluated asthma interventions that have been shown to decrease acute care visits, decrease hospitalizations, and increase compliance with asthma care plans. CDC also provides ongoing asthma training and educational activities and resources for state programs and others. For example, CDC works with partners to produce and disseminate training materials, such as the *Asthma Speakers Kit for Health Care Professionals* and the *National Asthma Training Curriculum* for increasing the skills and knowledge of the public health workforce. CDC also works with other federal agencies. For example, CDC participates in the NIH National Asthma Education and Prevention Program Coordinating Committee, and with EPA, supported the Surgeon General’s Healthy Indoor Environmental Workshop.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC will (1) continue to work with state and local health departments and other partners to improve asthma tracking; (2) continue to provide scientific leadership for identifying and tailoring unique, individual solutions for controlling asthma; and (3) assist a greater number of partner organizations in implementing and evaluating programs for reducing the incidence and severity of asthma.

For information on this and other CDC and ATSDR programs, visit www.cdc.gov/programs.

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